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December 1, 2021

The Honorable Lina Khan, Chair
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20580

Dear Chair Khan,

I write to you to today to highlight an October 28th article in the *Washington Post* titled "Misinformation online is bad in English. But it's far worse in Spanish."¹ I have been concerned for some time about the spread of misinformation online but was especially disturbed to read that Spanish-language posts are less moderated and left up longer than those in English.

As with any problem, it is crucial to start with the facts. Unfortunately, there is simply a dearth of data related to Spanish-language content moderation online. As it stands now, policymakers are left to rely on statements from social media platforms on their content moderation practices and testimony from whistleblowers like Frances Hauge. Sadly, those only pertain to content in English. Additional data is needed to understand the scope of the problem and how to tackle it.

As you know, Section 6(b) of the Federal Trade Commission Act empowers the FTC to require companies to file "reports or answers in writing to specific questions" about its business practices – as the FTC did with Amazon, TikTok, Facebook, Reddit, Snap, Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube in December 2020. Additionally, in April of this year, FTC Acting Chairwoman Rebecca Kelly Slaughter testified before Congress on the agency's recent enforcement actions, including filing more than a dozen law enforcement cases against individuals who participated in selling fraudulent COVID products. I applaud these initial efforts and ask that the FTC redouble its inquires, specifically as it pertains to misinformation in Spanish-language content online and in radio and television advertising.

In addition, it would be instructive to know specific metrics on how many Spanish-language posts were flagged or taken down compared to posts in English, and how many Spanish-speaking content moderators are employed at each of the above listed social media companies. Given the lack of information on Spanish-language content moderation, I am requesting the FTC compile this information and provide it to Congress, as it would prove useful for either future enforcement or legislation to safeguard families from misinformation.

I thank you again for all of your efforts to date and look forward to receiving the data you compile so that we can work together to combat the scourge of misinformation.

Sincerely,



Charlie Crist

UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN

¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/10/28/misinformation-spanish-facebook-social-media/>